

Floor Statement for General Debate
CONGRESSMAN KEN CALVERT (R-CA)
NASA Authorization of 2005
U.S. House of Representatives
July 22, 2005

The NASA Authorization Act of 2005 is the culmination of a lot of hard work on both sides of the aisle. We have developed a real bipartisan compromise. This is the first NASA Authorization bill to come to the House floor in five years. I want to commend Chairman Boehlert and Ranking Members Bart Gordon and Mark Udall for their cooperation in carefully crafting this bipartisan bill. It has taken numerous meetings of the principals and long, hard hours of staff work on both sides to come up with this balanced agreement.

This is the first Authorization bill to endorse the President's Vision for Space Exploration that was announced on January 14, 2004. This Vision includes the Shuttle's Return to Flight, the completion of the International Space Station, the development of a new Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV) which will allow us to return to the Moon by 2020 and then on to Mars and beyond. Our civil space program excites the world. In a Gallup poll released last week, more than three-fourths of the American people support a new plan for space exploration.

The Science Committee strongly supports NASA's new Administrator, Dr. Michael Griffin, and wants to provide him the flexibility to transform the Agency in this Second Space Age. Our bill provides the rules and tools that will enable the Agency to maintain its multi-mission agenda with a balanced approach for human and robotic spaceflight, science, and aeronautics.

The Science Committee has not addressed the Iran Non Proliferation issue in our bill today but we continue to work with the House International Relations Committee to resolve this matter. We are committed to resolving this issue before our bill is signed into law.

Once we pass the Manager's amendment, our bill will fully fund Exploration, the Space Shuttle, the International Space Station, and will increase funding for priorities such as aeronautics and the Hubble Space Telescope servicing mission. We have asked for a number of strategic plans in the areas of aeronautics, science, human capital, and facilities, in order to better guide NASA in the future. The bill also addresses the need for NASA to make better use of commercial products, including software, as well as to work with entrepreneurs in accomplishing NASA's goals.

In addition, the bill authorizes a prize program for NASA to stimulate innovation in basic research and technology, modeled on the X-Prize that was won recently by Burt Rutan and his SpaceShipOne team. We have also included a cost containment regime that has been crafted for NASA and its major development programs. Also, by remaining silent on the Shuttle program's length of operation, the bill provides the Administrator the

flexibility to move forward with his plan to retire the Shuttle program in 2010. Ending the Shuttle program at this time will free up funding to accelerate the development of the CEV and close the gap between the Shuttle and CEV. Hopefully, this flexibility will allow us to eliminate the gap entirely.

We have asked the Office of Science and Technology Policy to look at the R&D programs across the Federal Government and to document all programs that may be duplicative in multiple agencies and also those that may have fallen through the cracks. In addition, we asked NASA to consider various business models as it looks at the Agency's restructuring. In total, the information will enable Congress to craft legislation which parallels the exciting changes and challenges that NASA will be facing in the coming years.

We do not consider this legislation in a vacuum. Other nations are actively pursuing human spaceflight and exploration. China alone graduates almost as many engineers in a month as we do in a year. India too graduates five times as many engineers per year as we do. NASA, with its excellent reputation in exploration, science and aeronautics is the one national agency which can focus and inspire America's youth to take up the challenging work of math and science careers.

Again, I want to thank our Committee leadership and our hardworking staff for their efforts in putting together this bill. This bill is an important milestone for our committee, NASA and America.

####